

REMARKS

Applicants appreciate the detailed examination of the present application as evidenced by the Office Action mailed August 26, 2009 (hereinafter "Office Action"). In response, Applicants have amended independent Claims 1, 10, and 18 to clarify that the status information comprises job category and/or authorized access zone information, which is not disclosed or suggested in the cited references. Accordingly, Applicants submit that all pending claims are in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of all pending claims is respectfully requested for at least the reasons discussed hereafter.

Independent Claims 1, 10, and 18 are Patentable

Independent Claims 1, 10, and 18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U. S. Patent Publication No. US 2003/0023722 to Vinberg (hereinafter "Vinberg") in view of U. S. Patent Publication No. 2004/0148526 to Sands et al. (hereinafter "Sands"). Independent Claim 1 is directed to a method of outputting an alert and recites, in part:

...
obtaining a status from a sensor;
retrieving personnel information comprising identity and status
information for the personnel from a database, the personnel information relating
to the sensor;
generating the alert;
applying a filter to determine whether to modify a severity of the alert; and
outputting the alert;
wherein the status information comprises job category and/or authorized
access zone information. (Emphasis added)

Independent Claims 10 and 18 include similar recitations. Thus, according to independent Claim 1 as amended, the personnel information stored in the database includes both identity and status information for the personnel. Moreover, the status information comprises job category and/or authorized access zone information. Such embodiments are described, for example, on page 8, paragraph 24 of the Specification where the text explains that the personnel information can

include various identity information along with status information, such as job category and/or authorized access zones for the various individuals.

The Office Action acknowledges that Vinberg does not disclose retrieving personnel information comprising identity and status information from a database, but alleges that Sands provides the missing teachings. (Office Action, page 3). Sands is directed to a security method and system for authenticating a person's identity based on biometric information. (*See, e.g.*, Sands Abstract and paragraphs 7, 19, 24, and 37). The Office Action alleges that Sands discloses retrieving identity (biometric profile) and status information (disabled/not-disabled) information from a database. (Office Action, page 4). With respect to the status information comprising job category information, the Office Action alleges that Sands discloses this recitation in the table beneath paragraph 95 with "Admin" being a job category. (Office Action, page 4). Applicants respectfully disagree. The table beneath paragraph 95 of Sands provides a list of policies and respective descriptions of the biometric authentication requirements associated with those policies. As set forth in Sands' table, to be granted administrator access, one needs to request to login as an administrator and obtain two fingerprints from any two active users in the administrator group. Sands does not provide any description of including an administrator designation (or other job category designation) for personnel in the storage medium 205 as recited in the independent claims. Rather, Sands explains in paragraph 50 that the storage medium is used to store biometric profiles that are associated with the various users either by name or some other user identification.

With respect to the status information comprising authorized access zone information, the Office Action alleges that Sands discloses this recitation in paragraph 73 and in block 415 of FIG. 4. Block 415 of FIG. 4 relates to the server software 120 retrieving configuration information for a location from which authentication is sought. Sands explains that this information "might comprise the type of scanners (fingerprint, eye, palm... etc) as well as the brand and biometric format that each device produces." (Sands, paragraph 71). Thus, block 415

of FIG. 4 does not describe specifying authorized access zones for personnel and storing such information in a database as recited in the pending independent claims. Turning next to paragraph 73 of Sands, this paragraph explains that certain locations may be disabled regardless of who is logging in. Applicants submit that Sands' description of the ability to disable certain locations from access does not anticipate specifying authorized access zones for personnel and storing such information in a database as recited in the independent claims. Accordingly, Applicants submit that Sands fails to disclose or suggest, at least, the teachings missing from Vinberg related to the status information retrieved from the database comprising job category and/or authorized access zone information.

For at least the foregoing reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that independent Claims 1, 10, and 18 are patentable over Vinberg and Sands, and that Claims 2 - 9, 11 - 17, 19, and 20 are patentable at least per the patentability of independent Claims 1, 10, and 18.

Dependent Claims Are Patentable

As each of the dependent claims depends from a base claim that is believed to be in condition for allowance, Applicants do not believe that it is necessary to argue the allowability of each dependent claim individually. Applicants do not necessarily concur with the interpretation of these claims, or with the bases for rejection set forth in the Office Action. Applicants therefore reserve the right to address the patentability of these claims individually as necessary in the future.

CONCLUSION

In light of the above amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that the above-entitled application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested. If, in the opinion of the Examiner, a telephonic conference

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Serial No.: 10/675,517
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would expedite the examination of this matter, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney at (919) 854-1400.

Respectfully submitted,

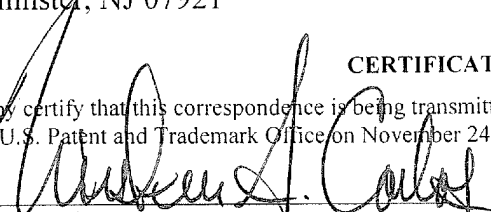


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CERTIFICATION OF TRANSMISSION

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being transmitted via the Office electronic filing system in accordance with § 1.6(a)(4) to the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office on November 24, 2009.



Kirsten S. Carlos